

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAJ-01 /069 W

----- 122098

R 240910Z SEP 76

FM USLO PEKING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6439

INFO AMCNSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

RUBQSTAMEMBASSY SINGAPORE 143

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT CH

SUBJECT: PEKING ATMOSPHERICS, SEPTEMBER 24

REF: (A) PEKING 1801, (B) PEKING 1 3

1. SINCE ITS REOPENING TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC SEPTEMBER
19, TIEN AN MEN SQAURE HAS BEEN A VERY BUY PLACE,
BUT OVER-ALL THE ATMOSPHERE IS MORE CARNIVAL THAN

FORMAL. THE SCENE DESCRIBED IN REFTEL BEFORE THE
SQUARE WAS CLOSED OFF FOR THE OFFICIAL MOURNING, HAS BEEN
CHANGED BY:

--STILL LARGER CROWDS, INCLUDING MANY ORGANIZED
SCHOOL-AGE YOUTH AND CHILDREN

--THE STRUCTURES AND APPOINTMENTS INCLUDING WREATHS
LEFT IN PLACDZAFTER THE SEPEMBER 18 MEMORIAL RALLY
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--THE RETURN OF THE UMBRELLAS ALTERED COMMERCIAL PHOTOGRAPHY OPERATION AT THE SQUARE, WHOSE NORMALLY FLOURISHING BUSINESS HAS INCREASED SEVERAL FOLD AS INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS FLOCK TO HAVE THEMSELVES PHOTOGRAPHED AGAINST THE ALTERED TIEN AN MEN BACKGROUND. MANY PEOPLE AND GROUPS BRING THEIR (RENTED OR PERSONALLY-OWNED) CAMERAS.

--PLA EFFORTLESSLY KEEPING CROWDS SOUTH OF THE BRIDGES LEADING INTO TIEN AN MEN AND ALL ROADS

RUNNING EAST AND WEST FROM THERE ALONG THE WHOLE WIDTH OF THE SQUARE; AND WIDELY SPACED PUBLIC SECURITY PERSONNEL AROUND THE SQUARE TRYING, MORE OR LESS FUTILELY, TO REGULATE CYCLISTS' ACCESS TO THE SQUARE.

2. MANY GROUPS, ESPECIALLY HIGH-SCHOOL AND COLLEGE AGE YOUTH, HAVE BEEN HOLDING BRIEF CEREMONIES PLEDGING TO CARRY ON MAO'S CAUSE AS THEY LOOK UP AT HIS GIANT PORTRAIT ON TIEN EU MEN. THEY HAVE THEMSELVES PHOTOGRAPHED DOING THIS, WITH PROPERLY SOLEMN EXPRESSIONS.

3. AROUND THE CITY FUNERAL DECORATIONS REMAIN UP. DESPITE INDICATIONS THAT OCTOBER 1, NATIONAL DAY, IS TO BE CELEBRATED IN A VERY RESTRAINED MANNER, THERE IS THE USUAL PRE-HOLIDAY RUSH OF PEOPLE BUYING CANDY AND DELICACIES.

4. SECURITY, ESPECIALLY AT NIGHT, IS AT OR (IN SOME LOCAL VARIATIONS) SLIGHTLY ABOVE THE LEVEL OF RECENT MONTHS.

5. OUTSIDE OF THE PEOPLE'S DAILY OFFICE, THE DISPLAY CASES NOW CONTAIN, IN ADDITION TO A COMPLETE SERIES OF PHOTOS OF MAO FROM YOUTH TO THE 10TH PARTY CONGRESS IN 1973 (INCLUDING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE LUSHAN MOUNTAIN SCENE SNAPPED BY CHIANG CHING), PICTURES SNAPPED AT THE SEPTEMBER MEMORIAL CEREMONY AT TIEN AN MEN. THESE HIGHLIGHT NATIONAL GRIEF, NOT A SUCCESSOR LEADERSHIP GENERATION. LONG-DISTANCE SHOT OF THE NATIONAL LEADERSHIP--NOT OF HUA ALONE OR HUA AND WANG HUNG-WEN AS IN THE TELEVISED COVERAGE--ARE

DISPLAYED ALONGSIDE CLOSEUPS OF MINORITY NATIONAL-
ITIES, WORKERS, LITTLE RED GUARDS, AND SOLDIAXUAN
FISTS CLENCHED AND TEARS STREAMING DOLN THEIR FACES,
WORDLESSLY SWEARING TO CARRY ON THE "CAUSE LEFT
BEHIND BY CHAIRMAN MAO."

GATES

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SUMMARIES, COMMEMORATIVE CELEBRATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976PEKING01918
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760363-0177
From: PEKING
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760923/aaaaatdq.tel
Line Count: 122
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 PEKING 1801, 76 PEKING 1
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 MAY 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <09 SEP 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PEKING ATMOSPHERICS, SEPTEMBER 24
TAGS: PINT, CH
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006